

Florida Family Policy Council

2023

Year in Review

LIFE
MARRIAGE
FAMILY
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY



A Year in Review

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From Our Family to Yours

Dear Friends,

As we approach another year's end and head into our 20th year as an organization, we are both humbled and inspired by the remarkable journey we have embarked upon together, and we are grateful for the grace that has carried us through the past year.

Reflecting on 2023, we are reminded of the unwavering support and dedication that defines our community. Your commitment to our shared mission has been the cornerstone upon which we've built impactful change. Through education, advocacy, and empowerment, we have striven to create a state where God is honored, life is cherished, families thrive, and religious liberty flourishes.

The year's successful legislative session is a testament to your faithful and generous support as we witness Florida's leadership in medical freedom, the protection of children, the defense of parents' rights, and the expansion of educational choices. The activities and accomplishments showcased within these pages attest to the collective power of faithful people serving a faithful God for his glory and our good.

Our vision remains steadfast as we gear up for the challenges of 2024, a pivotal election year. We are confident that the same spirit of resilience and commitment that has characterized our past endeavors will guide us toward even greater achievements. We stand united in our devotion to the values that define us. We are a family, bound by a shared purpose, and your continued investment in our work demonstrates the strength of this bond.

May God's blessings be upon you and your loved ones, and may the coming year be filled with renewed hope, resilience, and shared victories.

In His Service,

FFPC President, Team, and Board of Directors

2023

Pro-Family Days Highlight the Protection of Children

In March, our Pro-Life, Pro-Family Days event at the state capitol in Tallahassee was inspirational and eye-opening! We heard legislative reports and were encouraged by Speaker of the House Paul Renner, Senator Erin Grall, and Rep. Doug Bankson. Championing our theme, *Protecting Children, Born and Unborn*, we also heard from three amazing speakers: Chloe Cole, Chris Elston, and Dr. William Lile.

Having embarked on her own transition journey at the tender age of 12, only to subsequently detransition at 16, **Chloe Cole** spoke with firsthand authority on the deeply traumatic effects experienced by minors undergoing such treatments in order to shed light on the distressing consequences of “gender-affirming care” for adolescents.

Chris Elston, also known as “Billboard Chris,” a Canadian activist and small business owner, travels across North America wearing signs



that spark conversations about the often irreversible harm and serious long-term health consequences caused by gender ideology.

He delivered a compelling speech as a clear-thinking advocate for parental rights bringing awareness to “the biggest child abuse scandal of our time.”

Board certified in obstetrics and gynecology and known as the “Pro-Life Doc,” **Dr. William Lile** delivered

a gripping presentation sharing photos and videos of infants in the womb along with amazing stories of medical advancements which allow doctors to care for these little ones. A patient is a patient no matter how small! Undeniably, each person is created in the image of God at the moment of conception.

Featured guest speakers at Pro-Family Days (l to r) “detransitioner” Chloe Cole, “Billboard Chris” Elston, and Dr. William Lile, the “Pro-Life Doc.”



Florida Capitol Project Draws Record Participation

The Florida Capitol Project connects the pastors of Florida with their elected civic leaders for prayer, biblical partnerships, and public policy discussions.



As the flagship ministry program of the Pastoral Ministries division of the Florida Family Policy Council, the Florida Capitol Project is part of a multi-state initiative working to connect ministers of the Church to ministers of civic government (Romans 13:1-4). Together, this relationship creates a powerful spiritual and practical dialogue in addressing the needs of Florida residents, as well as the needs of our elected representatives. Over the last five years, we have witnessed significant spiritual impact as Florida's shepherds fulfill their calling to be "elders at the gate" of their state and ministers of the life-changing Gospel.

During the 2023 legislative session, we welcomed the largest attending group of pastors and Christian ministry leaders in the history of the program. To date, close to 300 ministry leaders, from 106 local churches, representing a mosaic of Bible-believing, evangelical churches have attended

this ministry opportunity in Tallahassee. The summer REACH program, which visits elected leaders in their local district offices around the state, exceeded its goals for in-office visits and ministry moments. For the first time, the Florida Capitol Project is creating biblically based partnerships with civic government for the benefit of the most vulnerable Floridians.

In his valediction to the Philippian Church, Paul writes, *"All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household"* (4:22). From the earliest moments of Christian existence, the Church has found a place in this space of civic government. If you are a pastor or Christian ministry organization leader, we would encourage you to go to our website for

information at www.floridacapitolproject.org. We are anticipating an even larger attendance during Legislative Session 2024. Register now for your spot, and our talented pastoral ministries team will be excited to connect with you personally.



Governor DeSantis Honored at Our Annual Dinner Gala



The Florida Family Policy Council's 18th Annual Dinner Gala on Saturday, May 20, hosted 800 supporters and featured Governor DeSantis as the keynote speaker. The Governor delivered a speech emphasizing Florida's amazing achievements. The event received national media attention and highlighted the Governor's remarkable accomplishments for which he was awarded FFPC's Wilberforce award. The William Wilberforce Award, our rarest and most coveted award, is given by FFPC's Board of Directors to elected officials who stand firm on principle in the face of severe opposition. It was a memorable evening! Mark your calendar for next year's event, May 4, 2024! We've secured a high-profile, national speaker to be revealed in January. In anticipation of the expected demand, we've added 500 seats. You won't want to miss out!

Governor DeSantis receives FFPC's most prestigious award, the The William Wilberforce Award, for his firm stance in the face of severe opposition.



Bold Victories in 2023 Legislative Session

Florida has truly emerged as a shining example of life, family, and liberty for the entire nation.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, our state took bold strides in areas such as protecting the unborn, advancing parental rights in education, defending the conscience rights of the medical community, and safeguarding our children from harmful practices. Florida has truly emerged as a shining example of life, family, and liberty for the entire nation.

Despite encountering strong resistance from the left, which appeared to lack compelling arguments, evidence, or influence, the legislature remained resolute and

steadfast in its commitment to doing what is morally just. In Florida, the left has faced setbacks in elections and debates, and now they are also faltering in the policy arena. Our appreciation extends to Governor Ron DeSantis, House Speaker Paul Renner, Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, and all bill sponsors for their unwavering dedication to safeguarding the well-being of children, both born and unborn.

Here are just some of the incredible victories in a record-breaking session!

SB 300

Heartbeat Protection Act:

This law protects the unborn after 6 weeks, severely restricts chemical abortions, and expands support for the Florida Pregnancy Care Network, providing needed resources for mothers with unexpected pregnancies.

SB 1580

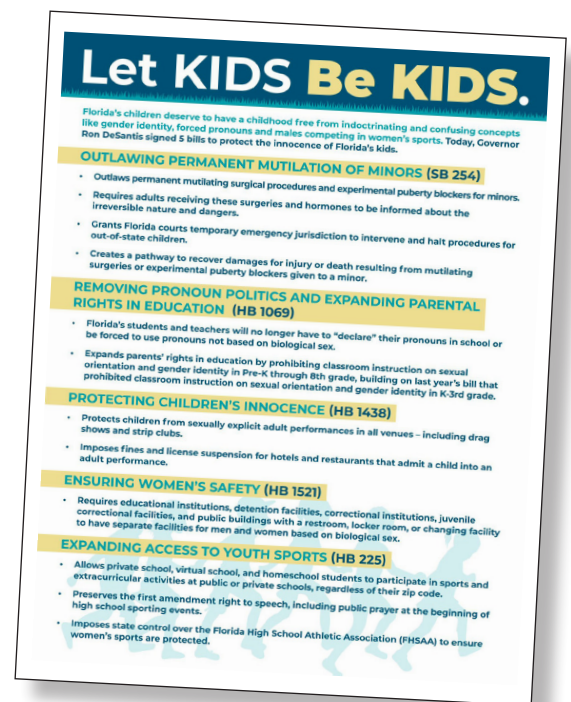
Medical Conscience Protection Act:

This law protects the conscience and free speech rights of medical doctors, nurses, or other providers, as well as religious medical facilities, to practice their conscience convictions in the healthcare arena.

SB 252

COVID Non-Discrimination Health Act:

One of strongest medical freedom acts in the nation, this law prohibits business and governmental entities as well as educational institutions from mandating masking, Covid testing, or Covid vaccination requirements upon their customers or employees, to ensure individual rights of religious freedom, conscience, and medical choice are protected.



SB 254

Gender Interventions on Minors

Act: This law bans anyone from subjecting minors to dangerous “sex change” hormone treatments or so-called gender reassignment surgeries.

SB 52**Student Social Media and Devices Safety Act:**

This law protects young students using electronic devices while in public school. Public school servers must block access to certain inappropriate websites as well as all social media platforms for students using those servers. Additionally, strict standards are required for electronic device usage in classrooms.

HB 1069**Parental Rights in Education Act:**

This law seeks to further build on the Parent's Rights in Education law by:

- expanding the prohibition on classroom instruction related to sexual orientation and gender identity to cover PreK-8th grade.
- protecting students and school employees from being forced to use preferred pronouns when those

pronouns do not correspond with biological sex realities.

- requiring teaching in higher grades to connect biological sex as the basis of gender.
- eliminating the sex ed supplemental materials loophole which unintentionally allowed explicit material if the material was considered "supplemental."
- adding additional rights for parents to access materials in the classroom and to rectify violations of the provision.

HB 1521**Safety in Private Spaces Act:**

This law requires certain private spaces in government facilities such as restrooms, lockers, showers, and certain sleeping quarters, among other categories to be kept separated by biological sex for the purposes of public safety and privacy.

HB 1/SB 202

School Choice Act: This law expands the Florida Education Scholarships to all students statewide, allowing tax dollars to follow the child to the school of the parent's choice, thus allowing parents to determine how their children are educated. This act will revolutionize school choice in the state of Florida and will allow parents, who would otherwise be dependent upon public schools, the freedom to choose other options!

HB 1423/SB 1438**Protecting Children from Adult Entertainment Act:**

This law establishes penalties for private businesses and local governments that allow children to have access to adult entertainment venues, including sexually explicit drag shows.

(Below) Governor DeSantis signing the Heartbeat Protection Act into law.



Florida Supreme Court Oral Arguments on the 15-week Abortion Ban

On September 8, 2023, the Florida State Supreme Court deliberated on the challenge to the 15-week Unborn Protection Act.

John Stemberger and Jacob Phillips wrote an amicus brief to address the misconceptions surrounding the Florida Privacy Clause regarding abortion. The focus of the brief is the origin and purpose of Article 1, Section 23 of the Florida Constitution, our Privacy Clause, which was enacted in 1980. In a case called *In Re TW, a Minor*, the liberal Supreme Court of 1989 struck down the parental consent law citing the privacy clause, and the pro-life movement has been working for its reversal for over three decades.

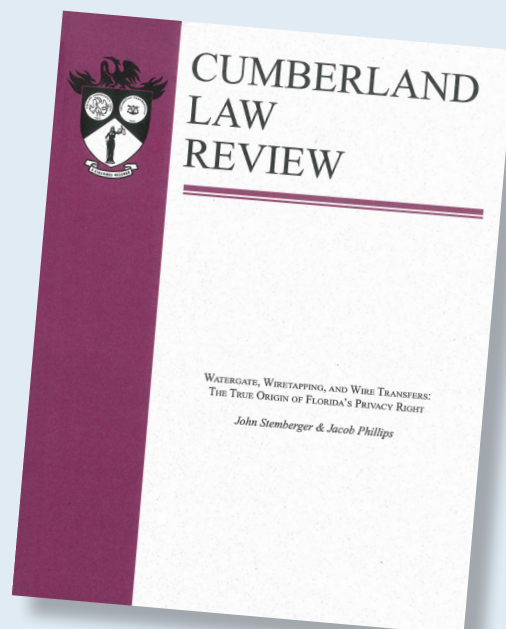
On September 8, 2023, the Florida State Supreme Court deliberated on the challenge to the 15-week Unborn Protection Act. This pivotal legal battle not only has the potential, with the grace of the Almighty, to result in the court affirming this crucial law safeguarding the unborn, but it also carries the weight of potentially overturning long-standing state court precedents. These precedents, which have held that our state's informational privacy protections established in 1980 somehow grant an amplified right to abortion, could be reshaped by the court's decision.

Florida now has the most conservative, most restrained state appellate court in the country, and we are hopeful for a positive outcome in this case.



Furthermore, the implementation of the Heartbeat Protection Act, designed to safeguard babies once a heartbeat is detectable at 6 weeks, hinges on the

Florida Supreme Court's affirmation of the 15-week bill. This confluence of legal developments underscores the profound impact the court's decision could have on shaping the landscape of abortion rights and privacy protections in the state. Florida now has the most conservative, most restrained state appellate court in the country, and we are hopeful for a positive outcome in this case.



Family Policy Alliance Conference & Statesmen Academy

In July, Florida Family Policy Council hosted and helped lead the Family Policy Alliance National Conference and Statesmen Academy in West Palm Beach. It was a remarkable gathering where policy council leaders from 40 states converged to exchange ideas, to delve into policy issues affecting various states, and to collaboratively devise strategies to safeguard children, parental rights, and religious liberty. Simultaneously, Statesmen Academy hosted 45 state legislators for training in godly, effective public service. Your

generosity not only serves our mission here in Florida but is also blessing other groups like ours across the country and has helped to amplify our collective voice.

FFPC hosted a gathering of policy council leaders from 40 states to collaboratively devise strategies on policy issues affecting various states and the nation while 45 state legislators received training.

FFPC is a member of the Family Policy Alliance (FPA), a Christian ministry that defends faith and protects families by organizing, educating, and mobilizing the social conservative movement in America. Originally founded by Focus on the Family in 2004, FPA is



emerging as one of the most influential leaders of the social conservative movement in America and is unique as the only national pro-family organization to host an alliance of 40 state organizations. FPA's state and federal election work has impacted election outcomes for years, while its national policy campaigns—such as Help Not Harm, Save Girls Sports, and After Roe—have changed the national narrative on issues such as life, parental rights, and the transgender agenda.

(Above) Dr. Jeff Myers from Summit Ministries addresses policy counsel leaders with the topic “The Rising Generation: How They Think, and How to Mobilize Them.”

(Below) A panel discussion: A Case Study in Prudent Policy Making—Help Not Harm Kentucky.



Senator Clay Yarborough was given the Honorary Statesman Award for his critical work defending families in the FL legislature.



Youth Scholarships Help Equip Future Leaders



Summit Ministry students enjoy nearby Garden of the Gods in Colorado.

Every year, we are thrilled to sponsor youth scholarship programs that build up and encourage the next generation. This year was no different. Over the summer, we had the privilege of sending sixty-one enthusiastic teens and young adults to pivotal events that will undoubtedly shape their futures. In June, **Patriot Academy's Southeast Leadership Congress** provided an immersive experience that equipped thirty-five students with vital leadership skills, fostered a deep understanding of civic responsibility, and ignited a passion for positive change within their communities. In July, eighteen students attended **Summit Ministries Student Conference** where they delved into comprehensive worldview training. Summit fosters thought-provoking discussions and seeks to develop a solid foundation rooted in biblical principles. We sent four students to **Teen Pact** in Tallahassee, which is designed to help younger students understand the political process, value their liberty, and

engage the culture. Two students were able to attend the **Forge Leadership Summit** in Ohio, an equipping event training young conservatives to lead in politics and culture. And finally, two students traveled to **Wycliffe Hall Summer School** in Oxford, England. Wycliffe Hall is working to see the nations transformed by the gospel by equipping a generation of ordained and lay leaders with gospel-centered knowledge, character formation, and pastoral skills. We are sowing the seeds for a brighter tomorrow!



Students at Patriot's Academy participate in mock legislature (below) and panel discussion (above).



Legacy of Life, FFPC-Published History of the Pro-Life Movement

To celebrate the first anniversary of the monumental Supreme Court ruling *Dobbs v. Jackson*, the case that overturned *Roe v. Wade* and returned abortion rights back to the state level, we edited and published a new book, *Legacy of Life: Honoring Fifty of the Greatest Pro-Life Leaders of the Last Fifty Years*. This beautiful, commemorative book honors fifty of the greatest founders, builders, strategists, and innovators of the pro-life movement during the last fifty years.

The book's purpose is three-fold: to honor those who have dedicated their lives to the pro-life cause, to educate the public about the history of the pro-life movement, and to inspire the next generation of leaders.



Order your copy of *Legacy of Life*. Visit: www.LegacyofLifeBook.com

We Must Continue to Fight: Partner with us in 2024

Since the Dobbs ruling, experts estimate that millions of lives have been saved, but the fight goes on. We must not give up as we tackle new challenges at the state level. Although we take courage from those who have gone before to bring us to this pivotal moment in history, we know that abortion will continue to be a contentious and divisive issue in the 2024 election. At FFPC, we are committed to the fight for life, and we are working in close collaboration with state legislators and a coalition of pro-

life partners from across the state, diligently preparing to combat the abortion amendment proposed by a group called "Floridians Protecting Freedom." Their deceptive "Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion" aims to make its way onto the 2024 ballot, posing a significant threat to the protection of life in our state. Your financial support empowers us to take a stand, to be a voice for the voiceless, and to work tirelessly toward protecting the sanctity of life in our beloved state.



How to Partner in our Work

The work of Florida Family Policy Council depends on supporters with a passion for our mission to defend life, protect marriage, help families, and stand for the right to religious liberty. Please contact **Chris Yates** (cyates@flfamily.org) or call our office at 407-251-5130 for more information on how we can work together for

Florida's families! You may scan this QR code to go directly to our donation page.



You may also donate directly via TEXT. Simply text: "give FFPC" and "amount" to **407-216-6969**.



MONTHLY GIVING

Become a Faithful Friend by pledging to contribute faithfully every month, either by automatic recurring donation using a credit or debit card, or by mailing a check monthly.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

An excellent way to avoid a shrinking income over time while also helping to avoid possible tax liabilities.

Other Ways to Support our Mission

PLANNED GIVING

This is an option that allows you to leave your legacy toward the continued support of our shared pro-life and pro-family worldview.

ESTATE PLANNING

We would be honored to be remembered in your estate plans in order to continue our work.

STOCK GIFTS

We can guide you through the process to give a gift of stock or other assets.



CORNERSTONE®
PAYMENT SYSTEMS

Please consider this opportunity for churches, ministries, and business owners to process transactions and payments with Cornerstone in a way that helps fund FFPC. We receive a small ongoing donation from Cornerstone based on your processing activity.

Cornerstone is a payment processor that does not donate any money from their profits to organizations that support pornography, abortion, and other morally objectionable movements.

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